



CITY OF PENDLETON

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Testimony of Robb Corbett, City Manager

City of Pendleton

February 11, 2021

Good morning Chairman Riley and members of the Committee. My name is Robb Corbett and I am the City Manager for the City of Pendleton. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 315.

In 2013, the City of Pendleton was included in the Pan Pacific UAS Test Range Complex with multiple partners, including Warm Springs and Tillamook. Since then, we have experienced significant success in attracting drone companies who want to develop commercial applications for this new technology. The City is the only publicly owned range in the state.

Test ranges were established to help guide the integration of unmanned air vehicles into the national air space. Test ranges, such as ours, are attractive places to test because of the relationship we have with the Federal Aviation Administration. We are also attractive because we provide services that are not provided at military test ranges, where testing was previously done.

Pendleton has a large, WWII era airfield, that once served as the regions commercial air service hub. Commercial air service migrated to the Tri Cities in response to their significant growth over the past 50 years. Our air field now has lots of room to grow, little air traffic, is surrounded by vast wheat fields and have attractive urban services.

The Pendleton Roundup is an economic engine that drives our economy. While we are a small town, we have a large number of hotel rooms and great restaurants. Just the type of business that are necessary to host transient aeronautical workers, and ultimately a great place for people to settle down and raise a family.

The City, the State and the federal government have made significant financial investments in creating this test range. We have hired people not traditionally hired by a municipality, invested in infrastructure and education. We are growing an industry cluster that is benefitting our town and the State.

As a public entity, it is crucial that we are able to keep our competitive edge, which we feel can be helped by the passage of SB315.

Here to speak about the specifics of this legislation and the need for its passage is Steve Chrisman. Steve is Airport Manager and Economic Development Director for the City of Pendleton. He is largely

responsible for the success we have achieved. He understands the needs of our clients and the needs of the City, if we are to succeed in creating an economic engine that will benefit not only the City but the entire State.

Thank you.